

March, 2003

RESEARCH PROPOSAL CURRENTLY UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The research outlined below is based on Expressions of Interest received by, and feedback from, the Sustainable Irrigation Program Management Committee. It may not precisely describe the final project agreement, particularly in terms of final project design, cash and in-kind contributions.

Harvey District Irrigation Futures Assessing and planning sustainable development opportunities	
Principal Investigator	Dr. Robert Summers, Senior Research Officer, Dept Agriculture 120 Waroona WA 6215 email rsummers@agric.wa.gov.au
Host Organisation	Dept of Agriculture, Baron Hay Court South Perth WA 6152
Issue or Problem to be Addressed	The Harvey Irrigation Area (HIA) located around Harvey in the southwest of WA currently has around 10,000 ha of land under permanent irrigation for dairy farming, beef grazing and horticulture, with a total irrigable area of approx 30,000 ha. The region is presently experiencing some soil salinity problems and produces drainage water that runs to environmentally sensitive estuarine receiving bodies. There is significant pressure on Perth's water supply and there is significant pressure to transfer further water to Perth. It is questionable whether the current levels of groundwater pumping are sustainable.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate key stakeholders to develop a shared vision on the irrigation futures of the Harvey Irrigation District, identifying major constraints and desired outcomes, and exploring options Develop an understanding of the integrated biophysical, economic and social system to investigate consequences of various regional options under different scenarios Provide a framework to integrate knowledge, guide research, and for review of the vision.
Comment	The project has the potential to enhance the sustainability of irrigation, to inform public policy, and to explore visions and values. The project will work collaboratively with a similar catchment scale project in the Goulburn-Broken, Victoria.
Research Timeline	Stage one completed by October 2003, Stage two by July 2006
Proposed Funding	Funding will not exceed \$250,000 from the Sustainable Irrigation Program. The final project budget is expected to be at least \$500,000.